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LETTER DATED 16 AUGUST 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, and with reference to the report from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on the work of the special team for Iraq (TM-1-99), transmitted to you by the letter of the Secretary-General dated 5 August 1999, I should like to make the following comments:

1. In paragraphs 39, 41, 59 and 68 of annex B, which includes an inventory of the materials discovered by the team in the two Special Commission laboratories in the Baghdad Monitoring and Verification Centre, there is a reference to five bottles described as "Iraq GD - hexane", namely, a toxic agent. This reference gives rise to many questions, in view of the fact that Iraq has never produced that agent (GD), and never submitted any samples of it to the Special Commission. Questions must therefore be asked as to where those five bottles came from and why they were brought to Iraq.

2. In subparagraph (d) of paragraph 5.5 on page 9 of the report, there is a reference to the proposal made by the team that the seven comparison samples of the VX nerve agent should be kept in a container designed to ensure the secure transportation of the dangerous materials, such as explosives, that were found in the laboratory. This reference implies that there were explosives in the Special Commission wing of the Baghdad Monitoring and Verification Centre, a fact denied by Richard Butler, the former Executive Chairman of the Special Commission.

3. We believe that the comparison samples of the VX nerve agent were used, not in order to test the equipment, but rather, in order to contaminate remnants of Iraqi warheads. The special team did not confirm or deny the possibility of their having been used for purposes other than testing.

4. It is now clear that the operation to destroy the agents found in the two Special Commission laboratories were not carried out because of the existence of any danger to those working in the Canal Hotel or anyone else, but only with a view to recovering equipment used for espionage, and getting rid of, inter alia, proof of the illegitimate activities of the Special Commission, both with regard

to the use of chemical agents for purposes of contamination, and of the explosive materials and documents that provided proof of such illegitimate activities. The clearest proof of this fact is the opposition of the United States of America and the United Kingdom to any suggestion in the Security Council that the VX samples should be analysed in order to settle the matter from the technical and operational points of view.

Here we wish to reaffirm the demand made by Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, in his letter addressed to the Secretary-General dated 28 July 1999 (S/1999/831) for a comprehensive inventory of all items at the Special Commission's premises in Baghdad to be made by a neutral, professional team, with the participation of diplomats representing the members of the Security Council, in order to determine all the facts concerning the contents of those premises.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative